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an optical system for dividing a beam in one direction; and  
an optical system for overlapping divided laser beams,  
wherein in said direction a width of said optical system for dividing is  
narrower than the maximum width of the laser beam before being divided.

3/4

(Amended) A laser irradiation apparatus comprising:  
a cylindrical lens group for dividing a laser beam in one direction; and  
an optical system for overlapping divided laser beams,  
wherein a portion of the cylindrical lens of said cylindrical lens group is  
shielded.

Please add new claims 5-17 as follows.

4/5. An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said lens is a cylindrical lens  
group.

5/6. An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said optical system for dividing  
said laser beam is a cylindrical lens group.

6/7. An apparatus according to claim 4, wherein at least cylindrical lens  
comprises quartz ground glass.

7/8. A laser irradiation apparatus comprising:  
a beam generating unit for generating a laser beam such that a cross section  
of said laser beam extends in both width and longitudinal directions;

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a cylindrical lens group for dividing said laser beam in one of said width and longitudinal directions;

an optical system for overlapping divided laser beams; and

a slit located between said beam generating unit and said cylindrical lens group for making at least an edge of the laser beam in a straight line which is parallel to a longitudinal direction of each cylindrical lens in said cylindrical lens group.

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Sub (E1)  
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8. An apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising a means for irradiating the overlapped laser beam to a substrate.

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9. An apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said substrate is selected from the group consisting of a glass substrate, a quartz substrate, a ceramic substrate, a semiconductor substrate, a plastic substrate, and an organic resin substrate.

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10. A laser irradiation apparatus comprising:  
a beam generating unit for generating a laser beam such that a cross section of said laser beam extends in both width and longitudinal directions;  
a cylindrical lens group for dividing said laser beam in one of said width and longitudinal directions;  
an optical system for overlapping divided laser beams; and  
a slit located between said beam generating unit and said cylindrical lens group for making at least an edge of the laser beam in a straight line which is vertical to a width direction of said cylindrical lens group.

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11. An apparatus according to claim 11, further comprising a means for irradiating the overlapped laser beam to a substrate.

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